

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 730
AN ACT TO PROTECT MAINE'S LOONS BY BANNING LEAD
SINKERS AND JIGS**

SPONSORED BY: Senator HASKELL of Cumberland.

**CO-SPONSORED BY: Senators CLEVELAND of Androscoggin,
JACKSON of Aroostook
Representatives SHAW of Standish, BLACK of
Wilton, CRAFTS of Lisbon, DAVIS of Sangerville,
ESPLING of New Gloucester, Jones of Freedom
and WOOD of Sabattus**

DATE OF HEARING: March 28, 2013

Good afternoon Senator Dutremble, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am John Bolland, Director of the Bureau of Resource Management at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of The Department of Inland Fisheries and Management neither for nor against **L.D. 730**.

LD 730 if enacted, would ban the sale and use of lead sinkers one ounce or less in weight, and would ban the sale and use of lead jigs 2 ½ inches or less in length. Currently, Maine law prohibits the sale of lead sinkers ½ ounce or less in weight.

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has long recognized that lead can cause mortalities in birds that ingest lead fishing sinkers or shotgun pellets. According to a recent Maine study, lead poisoning from lead sinkers and lead-headed jigs was the leading cause of death for adult loons, responsible for at least 28% of deaths between 1987 and 2012.

We support the intent of this legislation, specifically to reduce lead poisoning mortalities in loons. We also recognize that the current law, one that prohibits the sale, but allows the use does not appear to be very effective. However, in speaking with retailers and anglers who are knowledgeable with the fishing industry, we're concerned that product lines for

lead-free jigs may not be sufficient to provide anglers with desired products, especially larger sized jigs, at reasonable prices.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.